

Catherine Kuhlman

Executive Officer of the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

5550 Skylane Blvd. Suite A

Santa Rosa, CA 95403

June 13, 2006

N C R W Q C B

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Dear Ms. Kuhlman,

We are writing to you today regarding our concerns about the toxic legacy on the 434 acre ocean front Georgia Pacific (G-P) Mill Site which closed down operations in November 2002. This site stretches over approximately four miles of coast line from Noyo Harbor in the south to Glass Beach State Park (bordering the site) to the north. To the east the site is bordered by Highway 1 and the city center of Fort Bragg. Immediately to the south of the site lies the mouth embayment of the Noyo River. The project area is bounded on the north by low-density single-family residential housing. This site has many State parks to the north and south, that support seal haul outs, nesting habitats and other natural resources. The adjoining rocky intertidal marine resources that flank the western side of the mill are specifically identified as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA).

Recently, the California Coastal Commission found substantial issue regarding the coastal development permit and mitigated negative declaration for the removal of 26 building foundations and interim cleanup measures on the mill site. NCA and the local chapter of the Sierra Club filed the Appeal no. A-1-FTB -05-053 of Georgia-Pacific Corporation Coastal Development Permit.

We are very concerned that the current investigation and future plans for clean-up may negatively impact current and future coastal resources and may have serious negative health impacts for people, plants and animals that inhabit this coastal environment. The following are issues and concerns that we feel have not been adequately addressed:

- 1) The site has not been adequately characterized in order to make remedial and removal decisions.
- 2) There is no required investigation of the ocean, even though there are known releases into the ocean.
- 3) Resource Trustees have not been formerly invited to participate eg: NOAA, USFWS and Department of Fish and Game.
- 4) From anecdotal evidence gathered from numerous Fort Bragg citizens, we conclude it is highly probable that materials have been removed from the site without adequate characterization and public notification. For example, it is reported that fly ash was dumped by over 50 trucks at Podesta Farms in Fort Bragg after the mill site was closed down without any testing, a permit and or oversight. We have also been told that 5 to 7 trucks a day dumped fly ash at the McGuire Ranch for 5 to 7 years without any

oversight. According to former GP employees, this fly ash contained heavy metals and dioxins.

5) It is not clear from information that we have been able to review that technical staff has been used to support the technical needs of the project.

6) There is no toxicologist on staff and NCRWQCB has had to contract out to a non-regulatory agency.

7) It is our understanding that regional board project managers have not formerly consulted marine biologists that understand the releases to the marine biota and environment.

8) There has been an inadequate geo-physical analysis of the site.

9) The NCRWQCB does not have a public participation staff to adequately support the investigation, clean up and redevelopment where sensitive land use is involved.

10) According to the NCRWQCB mission statement, the Water Board's expertise lies in issues of groundwater pollution. This site has extensive soil contamination as seen by a recent sent to the Fort Bragg City Council from Fugro West which states:

"For the three ash stockpiles, analyses detected **767 to 991 pg/g** 1 of dioxin in samples collected at the surface of the stockpiles. The preliminary remedial goal (PRG) established by the USEPA for dioxin in a residential setting is **3.9 pg/g** as a total 2,3,7,8-TCDD equivalent concentration (TEQ)." The full letter/report shows a map where dioxins have been found in 37 sites throughout the mill site.

This report/letter seems to require the expertise of a regulatory agency with staff that specialize in soil contamination. It does not appear that NCRWQCB has staff who can oversee this site adequately regarding soil contamination.

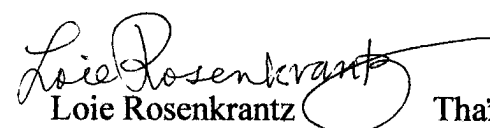
Based on our concerns as outlined above we believe that the current investigations may not result in a thorough site mitigation. Unless an appropriate evaluation is conducted, development could be seriously delayed. We would very much like to meet with you to discuss these issues. We look forward to hearing from you in the near future. You can reach us by phone at: 707-964-7085 or 707-964-3094.

Sincerely,


David Russell

for North Coast Action


Mary Walsh, Sierra Club, Mendocino Group


Loie Rosenkrantz

Thaïs Mazur

cc: Dorothy Rice, Department of Toxic Substances Control

William Massey, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Jim Baskin, California Coastal Commission